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DEPARTMENT OF TRADE AND COMMERCE
DOMINION BUREAU OF STATISTICS - CANADA
AGRICULTURAL BRANCH

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Ottawa, May 10, 1937, 4 p.m. - The Dominion Bureau of Statistics issued today the first crop report of the present season, indicating (1) the intended acreage of principal field crops as reported by crop correspondents at May 1; (2) the progress of spring seeding and (3) winter-killing and condition at April 30, of fall wheat, fall rye and hay and clover meadows.

SUMMARY

Intentions to Plant, 1937.- A decrease of half a million acres in the area sown to grain in Canada in 1937 is to be expected if the intentions of farmers at May 1 are carried out. The intended area of spring wheat is 24,367,800 acres compared with 24,779,700 acres sown in 1936 and 26,646,100 acres in the peak year, 1932. The intended decrease compared with the previous year amounts to 411,900 acres or about 2 per cent. The principal decrease will occur in Saskatchewan, while increases are indicated in Manitoba, Quebec and New Brunswick. Included in the spring wheat intentions is an increase in the Durum wheat area of 80,500 acres to a total of 1,708,000 acres in 1937. The intended acreage of oats and barley are practically unchanged from 1936. An increase in oats in Ontario is offset by decreases in the Prairie Provinces, and increases in barley in Ontario and Alberta are offset by decreases in Manitoba and Saskatchewan. Spring rye shows an increase of 3,800 acres or 2 per cent, while flaxseed will show a decrease of 40,500 acres or 9 per cent, if farmers' plans are realized. Mixed grains show a slight decrease of 10,100 acres or 1 per cent, while potatoes will show an increase of 4,600 acres, which is 1 per cent above the 1936 level.

Fall Wheat.- The area of fall wheat remaining for harvest in Ontario at 646,000 acres is 136,700 acres larger than the area harvested in 1936. The area winter-killed this year amounted to 8 per cent or 56,000 acres, compared with the same percentage on a smaller fall-sown area a year ago. The condition of fall wheat at April 30 was 94 compared with 90 at April 30, 1936.

Fall Rye.- The winter-killing of fall rye amounted to 9 per cent or 55,000 acres, leaving 413,000 acres for harvest compared with 457,300 acres harvested last year. The winter-killing was particularly heavy in Saskatchewan and Alberta this year where 15 and 13 per cent of the acreage were lost respectively. The condition for all Canada at April 30 was 82 compared with 94 at April 30, 1936.

Hay and Clover.- Winter-killing of hay and clover lands amounted to 12 per cent this year compared with 6 per cent in 1936. The winter-killing in Ontario and Quebec was unusually heavy with 14 per cent of the acreage lost in both provinces.. The condition of hay and clover meadows at April 30, 1937 was placed at 91 for all Canada compared with 99 a year ago, with reductions occurring in every province.

Spring Seeding.- The seeding of spring grains is considerably advanced over that of 1936. Forty-five per cent of the wheat crop was sown prior to April 30 with 8 per cent at the same date in 1936. Eight per cent of the oats and 6 per cent of the barley were sown by April 30, 1937 compared with 3 and 2 per cent respectively a year ago. The seeding of spring wheat is the earliest since 1931.

INTERPRETATION OF "INTENTIONS" REPORT

This is the seventh year in which an 'Intentions' report for spring grains has been compiled. Potatoes were added to the schedule in 1934. The acreages shown in this report for 1937 should not be expected to compare exactly with the actually sown acres - as shown by the results of the June Survey. The intended acreages are merely indicative of farmers' plans about the first of May and the areas actually sown may be altered by the subsequent weather, by changes in prices, and by many other similar conditions. An effort is made, however, to eliminate the habitual bias in the 'Intentions' figures as disclosed by the previous years' experience.

GENERAL CROP CONDITIONS

At the End of April.- Except in Alberta and Saskatchewan where farm operations are definitely ahead of last year, the spring has been backward throughout most of the country. Moisture deficiency presents a serious problem over much of the prairie area, particularly in southern Alberta and parts of Saskatchewan where soil drifting is already menacing crop prospects. This fact coupled with seed shortage will result in reduced acreages of wheat sown in these sections. The open winter experienced in Eastern Canada resulted in a higher than usual percentage of winter injury to meadows and fall sown grains.

In the Maritime Provinces and Quebec, little work was done on the land before the end of April. Hay lands show the adverse effects of the open winter when ice covered the fields for long periods. In Ontario, the mild winter was followed by cold wet weather in April and farm work was retarded. Moisture is plentiful throughout the province and serious flooding occurred in western districts.

Warm dry weather facilitated an early start with seeding operations on the prairies and the work is well ahead of last year at the same date. Generous rainfall will soon be needed over much of this area to bring along the young growth and there is little reserve to be drawn from the subsoil. General precipitation throughout Manitoba hampered work on the land but vastly improved crop prospects by providing ample moisture to ensure germination and early growth. In British Columbia, the season has been very backward. The advent of warmer weather should bring crops on quickly as there is plenty of moisture in the soil.

Since May 1. - There has been general improvement in weather conditions throughout most of the country. Fine warm days have enabled farmers to pursue their seasonable work. Seeding operations on the prairies are now general and in the northern districts farm work is well ahead of the same date last year. Rains are urgently needed in southern Alberta and south-western Saskatchewan where some soil drifting has occurred and seeding operations were held up for lack of moisture. In the eastern provinces and British Columbia, growth is responding rapidly to improved weather conditions.

INTENDED ACREAGES OF PRINCIPAL CROPS

For all Canada, the intended acreages for 1937 as reported at May 1 are as follows, with the 1936 acreages within brackets:Spring wheat 24,367,800 (24,779,700); oats 12,959,900 (13,118,400); barley 4,450,300 (4,432,500); Spring rye 181,500 (177,700); flaxseed 427,250 (467,750); mixed grains 1,162,700 (1,172,800); potatoes 501,000 (496,400).

For the Prairie Provinces, the intended acreages of the principal grain crops as compared with the 1936 acreages within brackets, are as follows: Spring wheat 24,113,000 (24,522,000); oats 8,250,000 (8,505,000); barley 3,681,000 (3,719,000); spring rye 171,200 (167,400); flaxseed 419,100 (459,300). By provinces, the intended acreages are as follows, with the 1936 figures within brackets: Manitoba - Wheat 2,669,000 (2,566,000); oats 1,398,000 (1,441,000); barley 1,370,000 (1,384,000); spring rye 13,900 (13,000); flaxseed 80,000 (88,000). Saskatchewan - Wheat 14,158,000 (14,596,000); oats 4,472,000 (4,610,000); barley 1,234,000 (1,299,000); spring rye 83,900 (83,100); flaxseed 322,400 (354,300). Alberta - Wheat 7,286,000 (7,360,000); oats 2,380,000 (2,454,000); barley 1,077,000 (1,036,000); spring rye 73,400 (71,300); flaxseed 16,700 (17,000).

PROGRESS OF SEEDING

At the end of April, practically no seeding had been done in the Maritime Provinces or Quebec. In the other five provinces the percentages of seeding completed by April 30 were as follows, with figures for the same date last year within brackets: Spring wheat - Ontario 4 (7); Manitoba 38 (15); Saskatchewan 46 (8); Alberta 45 (5); British Columbia 32 (29). Oats - Ontario 5 (12); Manitoba 6 (3); Saskatchewan 10 (1); Alberta 13 (1); British Columbia 20 (22). Barley - Ontario 3 (8); Manitoba 5 (2); Saskatchewan 6 (1); Alberta 7 (1); British Columbia 15 (12).

WINTER KILLING AND CONDITION OF FALL WHEAT, FALL RYE AND HAY AND CLOVER MEADOWS

Of the 702,000 acres of fall wheat sown in Ontario in the autumn of 1936, 56,000 acres or 8 p.c. are estimated to have been winter-killed, leaving 646,000 acres for harvest in 1937, as compared with a harvested area of 509,300 acres in 1936.

In all Canada, where the area seeded to fall rye in the autumn of 1936 amounted to 468,000 acres, 55,000 acres or 9 p.c. were winter-killed, leaving for harvest 413,000 acres as compared with 457,300 acres harvested in 1936. By provinces the acreages winter-killed and left for harvest are as follows: Ontario 3,000, 57,000; Manitoba 4,000, 75,000; Saskatchewan 39,000, 218,000; Alberta 9,000, 63,000.

During the winter of 1936-37, the following percentages of hay and clover meadows are estimated to have been winter-killed, with corresponding figures for the previous winter within brackets: Canada 12 (6); Prince Edward Island 6 (8); Nova Scotia 6 (2); New Brunswick 15 (4); Quebec 14 (9); Ontario 14 (5); Manitoba 5 (2); Saskatchewan 5 (1); Alberta 4 (1); British Columbia 2 (5).

The condition of fall wheat, fall rye and hay and clover meadows at the end of April 1937, expressed in percentages of the long-time average yields per acre, is as follows, with last year's figures for the same date within brackets: Fall wheat - Ontario 94 (90). Fall rye - Canada 82 (94); Ontario 95 (99); Manitoba 93 (94); Saskatchewan 75 (93); Alberta 83 (93). Hay and clover - Canada 91 (99); Prince Edward Island 99 (104); Nova Scotia 94 (101); New Brunswick 89 (98); Quebec 94 (102); Ontario 86 (96); Manitoba 92 (96); Saskatchewan 85 (99); Alberta 91 (98); British Columbia 94 (96).

GENERAL CONDITIONS AT THE END OF APRIL

Summarized from the Reports of Crop Correspondents.

Maritime Provinces -

Spring was backward throughout the Maritime Provinces with cold wet weather continuing well into April. A fairly open winter with light snowfall and considerable ice on the fields resulted in some winter-killing of clovers but injury was less than anticipated. Warm bright days around the end of the month helped dry the fields and permitted some work on the land but it will be the middle of May before much seeding is done. Conditions have been almost ideal for spraying and other seasonable orchard work and in the Annapolis Valley indications are for a good crop of apples.

Quebec -

The spring has been about as early as last year. In some districts, ploughing had been started by the end of April but only a small percentage of the farmers had sown any crop at that date. The ground froze deeply during the winter and in consequence, many meadows have suffered damage. Districts most adversely affected were those of the Richilieu Valley and adjacent to Montreal. Growth of young plants is being retarded now by dry soil conditions and rains would be welcome, particularly for pastures and meadowlands. Slight increases in acreage sown are indicated for wheat, oats, barley, mixed grains and potatoes but decreases are forecast in the areas to be sown to rye and flaxseed.

Ontario -

Following an exceptionally mild winter, weather was cool and wet during April and spring work was seriously retarded. Practically no seeding was done in April. Moisture supplies are plentiful throughout the province and in some parts there have been excesses. Fall wheat and fall rye suffered only moderate killing during the winter but hay and clover fields were badly damaged in addition to the extensive injury which occurred with new seedings as a result of the intense heat and drought last summer. Indications are for an increased acreage of oats, barley and potatoes. Fruit blossom prospects are good. Pastures and meadows are making slow growth and need warm weather. Acreage of tobacco will be the largest ever planted in the province.

Manitoba -

Cool backward weather during April with heavy snowfall and frequent rains, resulted in delayed seeding over much of the province. Some snow lay on the ground late in the month and at its close there had been insufficient growth to permit an accurate estimate of winter injury to clovers and fall rye. While work on the land was begun by the middle of April in southern districts, operations were retarded on account of subsequent precipitation although a fair percentage of the crop was sown by May 1. In general, spring rains have provided ample moisture to ensure germination and early growth but subsoil reserves are low, particularly in the north. In the northwest section, more moisture will be needed before the middle of May if newly seeded fields are to make satisfactory growth. Delayed arrival of settled weather may reduce the presently intended acreage and the reported scarcity of seed may also tend to curtail the area in crop. There is little accumulation of water in sloughs and in consequence wild hay will probably be light. A slight increase in acreage of wheat is forecast but no marked changes in acreages are indicated for other grain crops.

Saskatchewan -

Under the influence of weather conditions which favoured work on the land, seeding has proceeded rapidly throughout the province. The percentage of wheat sown by the end of April was greater than that for any year since 1931. Coarse grain seeding is also well ahead of last season. The best progress has been made in the south-eastern and Regina-Weyburn districts, while in the northern sections delays have been caused by snow and rainfall. In the north, along the eastern boundary and extending westward in the southern section, surface moisture conditions are reported to be satisfactory for germination. Subsoil moisture reserves, however, are low throughout the whole province and critically so in large areas where winter precipitation was below normal. Little damage from soil drifting had occurred up to the end of April. Winter injury to fall rye will substantially reduce the acreage to be harvested this season and the condition at April 30 was only 75 as compared with 93 on the same date a year ago.

Alberta -

The season has been much more advanced this year with spring work and seeding getting under way about two weeks earlier than during the past two years. This has been brought about by temperatures generally above normal during April and by moderate surface moisture conditions which have expedited seeding. The greatest progress has been made this year in the central districts. The southern section of the province, which is ordinarily the earliest in seeding, has suffered from very dry conditions accompanied by soil drifting and complaints of seed shortage are most numerous in this area. Compared with a year ago, the total acreage in the southern districts will be less but this will be almost compensated for by increases in the northern and Peace River districts. Fall sown rye acreage was reduced last autumn because of the dry soil conditions and there was more winter-killing due to the open winter. Good wet snow or rain fell in varying degree over the whole province on April 20 and 21. In the central and northern districts this precipitation provided enough moisture to last about two weeks although it contributed little by way of reserve in the sub-soil. In the south there is still serious danger of dust storms and soil drifting. Heavy rains are badly needed in this area.

British Columbia -

The season is very backward and growth has been slow. April was cold and wet. Soil moisture conditions are satisfactory and with the coming of warmer weather, crops should make rapid growth.

Intended Acreages of Principal Crops, May 1, 1937, as compared with 1936.

Crop and Province	Area 1936	P.C. of 1936	Intended Area 1937
	Acres	P.C.	Acres
CANADA -			
Fall wheat[1/]	509,300	127	646,000
Spring Wheat	24,779,700	98	24,367,800
All Wheat	25,289,000	99	25,013,800
Oats	13,118,400	99	12,959,900
Barley	4,432,500	100	4,450,300
Fall rye[1/]	457,300	90	413,000
Spring rye	177,700	102	181,500
All rye	635,000	94	594,500
Flaxseed	467,750	91	427,250
Mixed grains	1,172,800	99	1,162,700
Potatoes	496,400	101	501,000
P. E. ISLAND -			
Spring wheat	24,000	87	21,000
Oats	154,800	100	154,800
Barley	5,200	103	5,400
Mixed grains	25,700	102	26,000
Potatoes	33,400	98	32,700
NOVA SCOTIA -			
Spring wheat	4,000	98	3,900
Oats	96,600	99	96,000
Barley	8,900	100	8,900
Mixed grains	6,400	100	6,400
Potatoes	20,600	99	20,400
NEW BRUNSWICK -			
Spring Wheat	16,400	103	16,900
Oats	219,900	100	219,900
Barley	13,300	102	13,600
Mixed grains	3,700	100	3,700
Potatoes	45,100	99	44,600
QUEBEC -			
Spring wheat	56,300	101	57,000
Oats	1,690,200	100	1,690,500
Barley	153,900	102	157,000
Spring rye	6,300	99	6,200
Flaxseed	2,900	98	2,800
Mixed grains	128,800	100	129,400
Potatoes	131,200	101	132,800
ONTARIO -			
Fall wheat[1/]	509,300	127	646,000
Spring wheat	98,000	98	96,000
All wheat	607,300	122	742,000
Oats	2,345,900	104	2,439,700
Barley	519,200	110	571,000
Fall rye[1/]	53,200	107	57,000
Flaxseed	5,300	96	5,100
Mixed grains	953,100	99	944,000
Potatoes	145,000	103	149,400
MANITOBA -			
Spring wheat	2,566,000	104	2,669,000
Oats	1,441,000	97	1,398,000
Barley	1,384,000	99	1,370,000
Fall rye[1/]	80,000	94	75,000
Spring rye	13,000	107	13,900
All rye	93,000	96	88,900
Flaxseed	88,000	91	80,000
Mixed grains	10,800	100	10,800
Potatoes	31,600	102	32,200
SASKATCHEWAN -			
Spring wheat	14,596,000	97	14,158,000
Oats	4,610,000	97	4,472,000
Barley	1,299,000	95	1,234,000
Fall rye[1/]	243,500	90	218,000
Spring rye	83,100	101	83,900
All rye	326,600	92	301,900
Flaxseed	354,300	91	322,400
Mixed grains	18,200	95	17,300
Potatoes	44,200	96	42,400
ALBERTA -			
Spring wheat	7,360,000	99	7,286,000
Oats	2,454,000	97	2,380,000
Barley	1,036,000	104	1,077,000
Fall rye[1/]	80,600	78	63,000
Spring rye	71,300	103	73,400
All rye	151,900	90	136,400
Flaxseed	17,000	98	16,700
Mixed grains	21,800	95	20,700
Potatoes	27,800	103	28,600
BRITISH COLUMBIA -			
Spring wheat	59,000	102	60,000
Oats	106,000	103	109,000
Barley	13,000	103	13,400
Spring rye	4,000	102	4,100
Flaxseed	250	100	250
Mixed grains	4,300	103	4,400
Potatoes	17,500	102	17,900

1/ Harvested area, 1936, and area for harvest, 1937.